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# The Musical World

AND

## Dramatic Observer.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1890.

WEEKLY. PRICE 3D.

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PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION, 1890.  
April 14 ... Annual Dinner at 7 p.m.  
May 6 ... A Lecture will be given by Dr. C. W. Pearce.  
" 13 ... Mr. J. Percy Baker will read a Paper on "The Study of Musical Form."  
June 3 ... A Lecture will be delivered by Mr. H. Somers Clarke.  
July 1 ... Lecture at 8 p.m.  
" 15 ... F.C.O. Examination (Paper Work) at 10 a.m.  
" 16 ... F.C.O. Examination (Organ Playing) at 10 a.m.  
" 17 ... F.C.O. Examination (Organ Playing) at 10 a.m.  
" 18 ... Distribution of Diplomas at 11 a.m.  
" 22 ... A.C.O. Examination (Paper Work) at 10 a.m.  
" 23 ... A.C.O. Examination (Organ Playing) at 10 a.m.  
" 24 ... A.C.O. Examination (Organ Playing) at 10 a.m.  
" 25 ... Diploma Distribution at 11 a.m.  
" 31 ... Annual General Meeting at 8 p.m.  
Hart-street, Bloomsbury, W. E. H. TURPIN, Hon. Secretary.

**GRESHAM LECTURESHIP on MUSIC.**  
A VACANCY having occurred in the GRESHAM LECTURESHIP on MUSIC by the death of Henry Wyld, Esq., Mus. D., I am directed to give notice that candidates for the appointment must deliver applications, in writing, accompanied by copies of testimonials, to me on or before the 14th day of April, 1890.  
The appointment of Lecturer will be for one year only from the date of such appointment.  
Particulars of the duties of the office may be obtained from me.  
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On MONDAY, the 14th April, at 8.15 p.m., a paper will be read by Mr. G. F. HUNTLEY, Mus. B. (Cantab), F.C.O., &c., "On the Due Limits of General Musical Influences upon the Special Work of the Organist."  
The ANNUAL DINNER will take place on the 21st April. The Chair will be taken by Dr. E. J. Hopkins.  
The date of the Next Examination for F.G.O. is fixed for the 29th and 30th July.  
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## SPECIAL NOTICES.

\* \* All advertisements for the current week's issue should be lodged with the Printer not later than noon Thursday.

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## The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1890.

## FACTS AND COMMENTS.

The directors of the Philharmonic Society will scarcely be surprised if the latest instance of their method of direction, as afforded by the concert last week, continue for some time to excite serious comment and censure amongst the public, for whose benefit the concerts are presumably given. It is impossible that the contrast between the present policy and that of ten or twenty years ago should escape notice, or that the comparison of the two should prove altogether favourable to the former. Then the Society was so conservative in its traditions and sympathies that it was most difficult for any composer not already well-known to English audiences to obtain a hearing. Now it appears that anything is considered good enough to set before the most brilliant and critical audience which ever assembles in St. James's Hall, provided only that the piece possesses the merit of not having been heard before in England. The outcry for novelty which has been making itself heard so prominently of late seems to be construed as a demand for novelty for its own sake, irrespective of merit. That many of those who so clamour care little for absolute merit is too true, but it is not the duty of the Philharmonic Society to pander to these. It has always been the Society's proudest boast—let us admit that on the whole the boast has proved well founded—that it was the most powerful and completely representative of English musical societies. The duty it

has to perform is not small nor light, if it would maintain its old prestige, and its place in the respect of English musicians and amateurs; and it is because we are so profoundly conscious of the debt incurred in the past towards it that we feel driven to tell its directors plainly that their supporters will not bear many repetitions of the trial made on their respect and patience by the last concert. The disapproval manifested by a section of the audience at a particular moment was a very sure indication of a much wider feeling, which was not less real because it remained unexpressed. A Philharmonic audience is not a fit subject for experiments, and it is the first duty of the directors to see that such novelties as are produced are worthy of that production. That the mass of Belgian vulgarity heard last week was possessed of sufficient merit to justify its performance will not be maintained by many.

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With less certainty we venture on another consideration which seems to grow out of the question. It appears obvious that a wrong is inflicted on Mr. Cowen and his splendid band when every programme is laden with foreign works, each “personally conducted.” Mr. Cowen is bound in courtesy to offer the visitors every facility for rehearsal: which means, in plain English, that he himself is unable to obtain time for adequate rehearsal for the works which he is left to conduct. He must take what of strength or patience is left in his players after those qualities have been taxed by—often incompetent—strangers. It is not strange that under these circumstances, conductor and band sometimes fail to do themselves justice.

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It is still difficult to arrive at a just conclusion as to the merits of M. Saint-Saëns' new opera “Ascanio.” Reading between the lines of various criticisms, it would appear that the score, though abounding in charming and picturesque pages, is scarcely conceived on a sufficiently large scale. There are many delicate touches and subtleties of emotion, but these are not all that is required in a great opera. The effects produced are not broad or striking enough to lift the work on to the highest level. The structural methods adopted by M. Saint-Saëns seem to betray the influence of Wagner, although the French composer's individuality of thought and utterance is untouched. It has been said that “Ascanio” in this respect bears much the same relation to previous French operas as “Otello” bore to previous Italian works. The influence of the Bayreuth Master is there, but it has extended to method only, and not to thought. The following passage from “Le Guide Musical” may perhaps be accepted as the most succinct opinion yet given on the question:—

Mr. Saint-Saëns' score, though naturally full of talent and containing some excellent numbers, is yet anything but a work of the modern school. Instead of moving with the times, the composer appears to have made a step backwards, and renouncing lofty flights and noble conceptions, he has adopted a mixed style, charming and refined to be sure, but its uniform elegance sometimes induces monotony. “Ascanio” is a work conceived in an unobtrusive and delicate key, avoiding pretension as far as possible, but wanting relief, somewhat *floue*, and without the voluptuous embodiment and poetic exaltation which stir the emotions. In spite of the composer's great power and immense musical fervour his invention appears less fertile than in his previous works; the orchestration is undoubtedly solid and substantial, and plainly aims, this time, at sweetness and moderation; sobriety, smoothness, and lightness are its predominant qualities, but these are occasionally gained by the loss of striking colour, vigorous tone, and the union of polyphonic harmonies with passionate themes. A great many passages in the course of this long score arrest the attention; such, for instance, as the duet between Benvenuto and Scozzone, the beggar's couplets, and the final chorus in the first act; then, in the second, Scozzone's aria and Colomba's Florentine song

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which belong to pure comic opera, the finale of the second scene, and the King's song founded on a graceful ancient mode. The third act is devoted to the ballet, which is a very marvel of melodic and rhythmic variety and of charming orchestration. The fourth act, which is certainly the most beautiful and displays the greatest inspiration, may be quoted almost entirely, especially the duet between Ascanio and Colomba. A very short fifth act brings the work to a close.

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In Count Tolstoi's new novel, "The Kreutzer Sonata," there is a curious passage on music placed in the mouth of the chief character, from which we extract the following: "Music, they say, uplifts the soul. This is absurd: it does nothing of the kind. . . . Its effect does not manifest itself either in elevation or depression. . . . *Music throws me into the physical state of him who wrote it.* My soul dissolves and blends with his, and with him I am carried along from one mood to another: yet why it is so I know not. Beethoven, for instance, when he wrote the 'Kreutzer' sonata, knew well why he was in that state. His being in it led him to do certain things, and consequently for him it possessed a meaning, while for me it has none. Hence the music only irritates, suggesting no satisfactory issue. When a military march is played the soldiers keep time and advance, and in this case the music has an aim; or a waltz is played, I dance, and the object in view has been attained. . . . But in other cases there is nothing but irritation no clue to what should be done during this irritation. . . . Take the 'Kreutzer' sonata, the first *presto*, for instance: is that a piece to be executed in a drawing room filled with ladies? . . . Such compositions as this should only be executed in rare and solemn circumstances, and when it is found needful to do certain deeds which are in harmony with this music. After its performance you should do that which it nerves you to do. But wantonly to excite the energy of a feeling which jars with time, place, and surroundings, and is not meant to be embodied in action—this cannot act otherwise than destructively." There is food here for much reflection, but we may remark that if the feelings aroused by music are to be followed by actions corresponding thereto it will be necessary that the music selected by concert-givers should be chosen with more care than is now exercised—for example, by the Philharmonic Society. Every reader of Dryden remembers the tremendous power exercised over the actions of Alexander by the strains of Timotheus. Considering what much of our music is like, it is perhaps just as well, on the whole, that we of this "so-called Nineteenth Century" are not quite so sensitive.

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The Gresham Committee are in the valley of indecision, whence they will, it is to be hoped, issue speedily and safely. It appears that they intend to revert to their old and unwise plan of compelling each candidate for the post vacant by the death of Dr. Wylde to deliver a probationary lecture. It seems unlikely that such men as Dr. Bridge, Mr. Niecks, Mr. Armbruster, or Mr. W. H. Cummings will submit themselves to the required test; and it is still less likely that the Committee—whose members are *not* musically critical—would be in a fit state of mind to decide upon the merits of any after they had listened to a dozen abstruse lectures. The most interesting point about the whole matter—as far as the outside world is concerned—is that there should be so many distinguished men anxious to obtain a post which is understood to be of no great financial worth. Indeed, few things are more remarkable in the present condition of musical life than the number of admirable lectures which are constantly being given, and the interest shown by those who go to hear them. There are of course two sides to

the shield. It is not a sign of absolute health when action is replaced to any large extent by theories, and the incessant talk about art with which our ears are filled to-day is held by many to be an indication of our inability to accomplish any actual creation. In the great epochs of art, artists and public are content to create and to receive, in silence unbroken by often empirical theorisings and subtleties of aesthetic analysis. Work and talk do not go well together, in art or labour. On the other hand, it is pleasant to see such unmistakable signs of popular interest in the art. When men like Dr. Parry and Mr. Niecks in London, or Mr. Krehbiel and Dr. Ritter in New York, can constantly lecture on subjects which require for their comprehension a more than superficial intelligence, and when their lectures are always heard with interest, it is surely evidence that the public really wishes not only to hear music, but to understand its basis and its relations to other spheres of human activity.

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Spohr's Octett, performed at the Wind Instrument Society's last concert, may serve to recall for a few moments the memory of the person who caused it to be written—one of the oddest of art patrons, a certain Herr v. Tost, a wealthy cloth manufacturer of Znaim, and an enthusiastic lover of music. For the benefit of those persons who are unable to read the whole story in the composer's own delightful autobiography we may say that just after Spohr had arrived in Vienna in 1813 he was one day waited on by a stranger, Herr v. Tost, who after some preliminary compliments proceeded to make a most extraordinary proposal. This was that Spohr should, for a pecuniary consideration to be agreed upon, assign to his visitor for the space of three years all the pieces of music he might compose in that time, keeping no copies of the scores, which were to be handed over to Herr v. Tost. The composer naturally inquired if his works were not to be performed all that time. "O Yes!" (was the reply) "as often as possible, but only on my lending them for the purpose, and in my presence." Puzzled by this strange proposal, Spohr desired to find out what the man wanted to do with the works, and eventually his would-be patron informed him that his chief object was to get himself invited to the parties at which Spohr's pieces might be played, and to secure this he desired to have them in his own possession. And besides this, he thought that the possession of these treasures would procure him connections valuable from a business point of view. As Herr v. Tost's pecuniary proposals were as liberal as his ideas were eccentric, Spohr eventually agreed to the arrangement, and the Herr, with his portfolio of music, became one of the familiar features of musical society in Vienna. He always laid the parts on the desks himself, and when the piece was over went round to collect them again; and Spohr adds that when any piece was greatly applauded he was as much pleased as though he had himself been the composer. The introduction of "The Harmonious Blacksmith" into the Octett was at the suggestion of Herr v. Tost, who was then (1814) about to pay a visit to England, and hoped by this means to excite an interest in the work in this country. The novelty to be performed at the society's next concert is another work which owes its existence to the worthy cloth-manufacturer, whose encouragement of art deserves our gratitude, however much we may be disposed to laugh at his methods.

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Art is so long, life is so short, that one is often inclined to make a jest of the Amateur—who attempts a difficult art while he is able only to devote to it some few of the less valuable hours of his day, or even of his week. Music, it is said, or Acting, or the painting of pictures, brooks no brother near its throne; and the amateur who



can give but half his soul to his work must needs do that work badly. But this is only a half-truth; there is another side to the question. This very week Mr. Clement Scott, perhaps our ablest critic where acting is concerned, has bidden all our young "professionals" take a lesson from the admirable elocution of an amateur who has just been playing the difficult part of Henry IV.; and none of our readers can fail to know the good work done of late years by amateur choirs—by amateur orchestral societies. May not the influence of the amateur be big with possibilities in the near future? May it not lead to the establishment of the practice of art as a part of the life of every healthily-fashioned individual, and reduce the number of those who devote their whole existence to it? (and, moreover, are obliged to make their living by it—a dangerous, if not a degrading necessity). One would like to think of art as that sacred part of life, that thing apart, which the poems written by the painter, the sculptor's music, were in Browning's "One Word More:" a thing to be cherished, to be practised with a silent, almost a secret devotion, to be worked at, night and day, in stolen hours, for sheer love, and with no thought or possibility of gain.

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*Nihil humanum a nobis alienum putamus.* This modification of the poet's wise remark may serve us to introduce a subject so apparently alien to our usual topics of discussion as the Boat Race. It is not our purpose, indeed, to tell of how the members of the hospitable club hight the Lyric went a-sailing upon the Thames with their sisters and cousins and friends' sisters to see the famous struggle, and of how, by reason of the low tide, they could not land in dignified fashion, but were hauled up a slimy bank amid the scoffings of the baser sort. We propose to draw a moral for the benefit of our artistic readers from the fact that by virtue of superiority in "form" the Oxonians wrested victory from a crew of greater strength and weight. The victory, it has been said, was one of form over force. Hereon may be founded axioms far wider in their reach than those which will doubtless be handed down to succeeding generations of 'Varsity athletes. It is so, and ever will be so, in art also, though there are many modern pianists who refuse to believe it. In playing an instrument of any kind—except, perhaps, the triangle and the fool—the highest results are attained by the performer who combines the maximum degrees of strength and elegance. The noblest style of architecture yet developed—the Gothic—is another example, for herein lightness, grace, and strength are so marvellously combined that we may well pardon Mr. Ruskin the dream wherein he beheld the carved stones of St. Mark's break into a foam of marble ecstasy. And finally, it may be accepted without debate that the greatest power of emotion finds its outlet in the most beautiful music, whether of words or tone.

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There are not wanting to-day cynical philosophers who assert that morality is only a question of climate and epoch. For the things which in one country and age are counted criminal in another are either condoned as venial offences or regarded as meritorious deeds. Against this doctrine we have hitherto fought with the courage of conviction, holding the principles of morality to have an absolute existence, independently of geographical conditions. But our faith has received a rude shock; and these are the details of the incident which has dealt this blow at our optimism. On February 1 our contemporary, the "Musical Standard," contained a critical article on Mr. Stavenhagen, which was signed by E. Polonaski. On March 15 the "American Musician"—a paper with whose claims to rank as a legitimate leader of public opinion

our readers have had many opportunities of acquainting themselves—contained an article with the same heading, bearing the superscription "For the 'American Musician,'" and signed "Chas. Millward." In these facts there is nothing remarkable, so far; but it is surely curious that from the first word to the last the two articles are identical. Stay—we believe that throughout the article, a column long, there are three sentences in which a single word has been altered, and Mr. Millward has added two lines at the end which are all his own. Here surely is enough to give pause to the sternest moralist. In England this proceeding would have been thought sufficient to damn the reputation of any journal; it would have been pronounced the most flagrant example of literary dishonesty on record. But we know—for they have told us so—that the editors of the "American Musician" are honourable men, painfully conscientious, moreover, in their denunciations of the least approach to evil-doing on the part of their enemies. With so stainless a record of integrity behind them, can any one dare to accuse them of theft? Verily not; the alternative course is to agree with our pessimist teachers that that which is rightly held to be gross literary baseness in England is in America a blameless act.

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Here is the latest illustration of the high development which the art of advertising has reached in America. We commend it to the notice of Mr. Harris, should he ever—the chance is of course remote—find the attractions of Italian opera failing. The scene is the office of a theatrical manager in the very far West; the speakers being the manager himself and the advance agent of a touring opera company:—

*Manager*—"Want dates for your company, eh? What's the show about?"

*Advance Agent*—"It's an opera company."

"Opera? Won't go, I'm afraid. What's your best piece?"

"We have drawn the largest houses with 'William Tell.'"

"I'm afraid it won't go here. Nobody would come."

"I think they would if it were properly advertised."

"Well, I'll try it. Jack!"

Jack (an assistant)—"Yes, sir."

"Rush over to the newspaper office and tell 'em to announce that next week we're goin' to have a new and excitin' musical dramer called 'Bill, the Shooter.'"

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There are lively times in store for the Strauss Orchestra, which is shortly going to make a concert tour in America. At a meeting in Chicago of the National League of Musicians, President Wolseifer spoke of the famous Viennese players as "a band of itinerant ear-splitters." A more convincing proof of the absurd lengths to which our cousins are carrying protection in art could hardly be found. That the Strauss Orchestra—when it is not, as was the case in London, called on to play in the open air—is one of the most perfectly artistic string bands in the world is not much to the point. The real question is that its members are not taken to America to replace native musicians, but merely to be "run" like any other celebrated constellation of "stars." Were not retaliation undignified and unworthy we might suggest the introduction into every European capital of a bill prohibiting the importation of American musicians. The ranks of our singers would be considerably thinned if so drastic a measure were put in force, for it would be easy to name an imposing number of American artists who forsake their native land to abstract the dollar of the despised European. But so long as they are good artists—which some of them are *not*—we have welcomed them gladly. Why should not America be willing to adopt the policy of reciprocity?

The directors of the Crystal Palace have just issued an outline of the principal arrangements for the summer of 1890. The summer season will be inaugurated on May 3, when "The Golden Legend" will be performed in the concert-room in the afternoon, and a promenade concert will be given in the central transept in the evening. The great musical event of the year, however, will be the performance of Mendelssohn's "St. Paul" by a chorus and orchestra numbering 3,500 performers. Madame Albani, Madame Patey, and Mr. Edward Lloyd have accepted engagements for this concert, and it is confidently expected that Mr. Santley will arrive in London from Australia in time to take part in it. The weekly displays of fireworks by Messrs. Brock commence on Thursday, May 15, and the illuminated garden *fêtes*, with *al-fresco* ballet, in June. The programme contains a long list of floral and horticultural exhibitions, popular choral meetings arranged by various societies and associations, and the popular holiday *fêtes* of benevolent and other societies. From July to September a great International Exhibition of Mining and Metallurgy will be open, under the patronage of the Lord Mayor of London and the presidency of his Grace the Duke of Fife.

The Madrigal Society, which is entitled to rank as one of the most venerable institutions of its kind in existence, having been founded in 1741 by John Immyns, will celebrate during the present year its 105th anniversary. Not the least interesting feature of the celebration will be the performance of Tallis's famous motet, "Spem in alium non habui," written in forty parts. The work will be conducted by Dr. Bridge.

We have received the twenty-ninth annual report of the "F" (Broadwood) Company of the St. John's division of the Queen's Westminster Volunteers. From this it appears that the company is in excellent circumstances, its members having distinguished themselves in the most honourable way for their efficiency in all departments of their work. The company numbers 81, and of these no less than 25 have won the marksman's badge.

Reports reach us from New York of the great success which Mr. Edward Scovell has attained during the past season as leading tenor of the Boston Ideal Opera Company. Brilliant engagements are offered him for next winter, one of which guarantees him a salary twice as large as any ever paid hitherto in America to an English operatic tenor.

The Misses Delves-Yates announce an evening concert, under distinguished patronage, at Princes' Hall, on 24th instant, when they will be assisted by Mr. Plunket Greene, Mr. Pery (of Milan), Mr. Orton Bradley, Signor Tivadar Nachez, Mons. Gillet, the celebrated violoncellist from Paris, Signor Carlo Ducci, and Mr. Rupert Garry.

Invitations have been issued for the marriage of Dr. William Luther Croll and Miss Alice Maud Whitacre, which will take place on April 19th at St. George's, Hanover-square. The many friends of the popular young soprano will join in sincere congratulations.

A reception was held at Messrs. Broadwoods' on Wednesday in honour of Sir Charles and Lady Hallé. At the unusually early moment of going to press we are unable to give any account of the interesting function, to which we shall return next week.

The East End is to have its opera season this year, too. Mr. J. W. Turner will bring his company to the Standard Theatre, where "The Bohemian Girl" will be given on the afternoon and evening of Easter Monday.

Miss Susetta Fenn announces her fifth annual concert on 24th instant at Brixton Hall, when she will be assisted by Mdle. Vagnolini, Mr. Sinclair Dunn, Mr. Egbert Roberts, Mr. Mathay, and Mr. Reynolds.

M. Paderewski, who has lately been winning golden opinions in Paris, will give a series of pianoforte recitals in London on May 2, 9, 20, 29. This is good news.

The annual dinner of the Guild of Organists will take place on April 21. Dr. E. J. Hopkins will preside.

### ROYAL INSTITUTION.

Mr. Niecks at the opening of his fourth and last lecture on the "Early Developments of the Forms of Instrumental Music," delivered on the 27th ult., said that music in this country had latterly made such rapid progress, and given proof of such vigour, that before long England would once more have a seat in the musical council of nations, a position she lost in the eighteenth century, but fully enjoyed in earlier times. Even when at her lowest ebb she did not lack estimable composers who cultivated the lesser art-forms, those of the anthem, glee, and ballad, with success. It was necessary to be careful regarding the meaning we attached to words; the English opera in the eighteenth century was practically a play with incidental songs, and perhaps a chorus or two. It might be asserted that from the death of Purcell, in 1695, to the advent of Sterndale Bennett, in 1816, England did not produce a single composer of genius, although some of her men of talent now and then inclined one to think that under more favourable circumstances they might have developed powers that remained latent. A comparison of some of the foremost composers of this period illustrated this in a striking manner. England produced Croft, Greene, Arne, Dibdin, Shield, Storace, Battishill, Webbe, Calcott, Crotch, Wesley, Bishop, and Field. Germany Handel, Bach, Graun, Gluck, Hasse, Philip E. Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Hummel, Schubert, Spohr, and Weber. England, however, had a glorious past in earlier times, and gave every sign of having a glorious future. Amongst English theorists who occupied a prominent position in their time were John Cotton, who lived at the end of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth centuries; William de Odington, who was born early in the thirteenth century; Simon Tunsted, Robert Handlo, whose works were of the fourteenth century; and John Hothby and John Hamboys in the fifteenth. Mr. Niecks then spoke of English counterpoint in the thirteenth century, when this country was in advance of all other nations; and of John Dunstable (d. 1453), a leader in his art, and other English composers of that time, of whom works have come down to us. In the fourteenth century the "minstrels" were a numerous and most esteemed body, but so exacting did their claims for support and patronage become, that in 1315 Henry II. passed an Act forbidding them to demand meat and drink or express dissatisfaction with the amount given them for their services under pain of forfeiting their license to pursue their art. The golden age of music in England was during the sixteenth century, when, among others, such men as Christopher Tye, Thomas Tallis, Richard Farrant, William Byrde, Thomas Morley, John Dowland, John Bull, and Orlando Gibbons enriched the musical treasury with great masterpieces. The decay of the musical art in England had been attributed to several causes. One of them was Puritanism; but although they might have all participated in bringing about the regrettable result, against each of them, as a sole agent, objections suggested themselves.

In the second quarter of the seventeenth century it seemed as if the sixteenth century had exhausted the musical power of England.

No piece of instrumental music anterior to the sixteenth century had come down to us. There existed several allusions to the music played at



entertainments and theatres in the reign of Elizabeth. These showed the use of a variety of instruments then popular, which were employed with much perception of artist effect.

The sonata, both in name and form, made its appearance much later in England than in Italy. The English were among the first, however, to practise the variation form, which they cultivated with success, although ultimately it degenerated into superficial formality. The fantasia was the most favourite form, of which Mr. Niecks quoted descriptions by Thomas Morley and Christopher Simpson. The seventeenth century produced John Jenkins, Henry Lawes, Matthew Lock, Pelham Humfrey, John Blow, Michael Wise, and the greatest of English composers, Henry Purcell, 1658, one of the greatest geniuses the world had ever seen, and who had he lived longer would probably have done much to revive and make more brilliant England's then departing musical glory. We heard much of the visits of foreign musicians to this country, but in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries English musicians visited the Continent, and in many instances settled there; such were Peter Phillip, the clever organist and composer, who lived in the sixteenth and seventeenth century in Belgium; and Dowland, who travelled through several countries, and was for about ten years at the Court of Copenhagen. The high reputation in which such men and English art were held on the Continent could be gathered from the laudatory remarks to be found in books of that period on their performances and works.

The interest of the lecture was much enhanced by the admirable performance of the following instrumental pieces by a small orchestra composed of pupils of the Royal Academy of Music:—A fragment of an *In Nomine*, by William Byrde. The origin of this name Mr. Niecks said was obscure, but the music, composed for voices or instruments, consisted of a *canto fermo* (in this instance placed in the highest part), written in long notes and accompanied with other parts moving more briskly in a fugal style. A Fantasia in two parts, *La caccia*, by Thomas Morley (1595), a well-written composition in fugal style. A stately "Pavan," a lively "Galliard," and an "Air" of pathetic character from a book by Anthony Holborne, entitled "Pavans, Galliards, Almains, and other short Aires, both grave and light, in five parts, for viols, violins, or other musically winde instruments," 1569. Musical Dictionaries were silent concerning this work of the composer, and for the part also concerning himself, but he must have been a person of some distinction in his time, as he was "Gentleman and servant to Her Most Gracious Majesty," and Dowland addresses him as "most famous musician," &c. Mr. Niecks drew attention to the humour of the words "other musical instruments" in the title of this book, which was, moreover, probably the earliest printed collection of dance music in England. A Fantasia in three parts for viols, by Orlando Gibbons, 1610. The viol at this period was still the favourite instrument, violins, though well known, not coming into vogue till about the middle of this century. One of Michael East's "Fancies of three parts, for two treble viols and a bass viol, so made as they must be played and not sung" (1638). An important distinction showing the progress made in instrumental independence. A "Fancy in three parts, for viols," and "the five Bell Consorte," by John Jenkins: in the latter piece the bells were tuned to D, E, F#, G, A, on which all kinds of changes were rung. None of the fancies of this once most popular composer, who lived from 1592 to 1678, were printed, and the specimen played was copied from a manuscript in the British Museum. Two pieces from Matthew Lock's Instrumental Music to the "Tempest," 1670. These consisted of an air and gavotte in which the counterpoint was fluent, though sometimes at the cost of simultaneous harmony. Henry Purcell's "Golden Sonata" for two violins, violoncello, and thorough-bass, brought out in 1697, which consisted of a dignified opening movement, an adagio, a consono (fugal allegro), a grave movement, and a lively concluding one, the whole admirably conceived and of a somewhat severe character.

There is nothing stranger in the world than music: it exists only as sound, is born of silence and dies away in silence, issuing from nothing and relapsing into nothing; it is our own creation, yet it is foreign to ourselves; we draw it from out of the silent wood and the silent metal; it lives in our own breath; yet it seems to come to us from a distant land, which we shall never see, and to tell us of things we shall never know. It is for ever striving to tell us something, for ever imploring us to listen and to understand; we listen, we strain, we try to take in its vague meaning; it is telling us sweet and mighty secrets, letting drop precious talismanic words; we guess, but do not understand. And shall we never understand? May we never know wherefore the joy, wherefore the sadness?—Vernon Lee.

## CONTINENTAL PICTURES.

The collections of paintings by Continental artists, now on view at the French Gallery and at Messrs. Dowdeswell's, afford ground for some fair logical deductions; which, being concerned with the relative merits of the earlier romantic work and that of the present day, would lead, not unnaturally, to a suggestion of what may happen in the future to romantic art. We will suggest then, that romanticism may possibly fall through a degrading devotion to one particular manner, even as the classic school before it tripped and fell over a manner of another kind, the degenerate offspring of a grand style. It would not be the fault of romanticism, but might be rather brought about by the painters who in striving for the "ism" pay small heed to the primary reason for their art's existence. Undoubtedly earnestness is the chief feature of the large works by Von Uhde and Max Liebermann: whether that earnestness is displayed in seeking the substance or the shadow is another question. There is individuality in the work of both, and both are masters of a sound technique, but it is doubtful whether these qualities are quite sufficient to make the large works great. We refer more particularly to Fritz Von Uhde's "Last Supper" and "Suffer little children to come unto me." This last represents a cottage interior, with freely grouped men, women, and children of ordinary German type, most successfully treated. But then the central figure, Saviour of the world, is treated in the same spirit. That his teaching lay in very lowly haunts of men we know, but unless this central figure is a basis for allegory, the cottage interior, the group, and the figure of any mortal, to whom from age or dignities reverence is due, would have sufficed. As an allegorical work, the precise nature of the thought which gave it birth would seem to require more forcible expression. Max Liebermann's "Flax Spinner," showing the interior of a long shed with a row of female figures in a half light is clever, but wanting in interest; while the "Women mending nets, Katwyck, Holland," with its far reaching flats covered for the most part with nets, and dotted with the women at work on them, is full of vigour. Breadth of treatment, and an effect of boisterous breeziness form the particular merits of the work. Two sketches on the dunes one of a woman "Drying Linen," and another of a "Cart-Road," also testify to Max Liebermann's fondness for light outdoor effects rendered with the greatest breadth. A view of the "Garden of the Maison des Invalides" at Amsterdam, with its rows of seated pensioners, dotted with patches of sunlight which gleams through the foliage overhead, is a piece of really good painting and a pleasant picture as well. In addition to the work of these masters there are productions of diverse kinds and varying merit from many well-known studios among them being "M. de Munkacsy's "Two Families," remarkable for its free handling and strength. "The Poppy Field," by Adrien Demont, will also repay inspection. The cool bluish tints which run throughout the work, starting from the stems and leafage of the foreground plants, and finishing in the greenish tones of an evening sky, form the chief motif of a pleasant landscape.

Let us, however, glance at some of the works to be seen at Messrs. Dowdeswell's, and our very first impression is that a glance is useless, and that to enjoy the work of the earlier romanticists we must see it again and again, until we learn from each picture some of the many beauties which the artist himself saw in his subject. For here seems to be the difference between the work of the pioneers and that of the present-day artists. The earlier men loved the subject, and desired to paint that they might show the beauty of it, whereas the more modern pictures impress us with the idea that the painter loved the painting, and cared little about the subject. In proof of the first part of the statement, let us examine any of the French work before us. Take, for instance, Daubigny's "Open Sea," and we find the master lost in admiration of the grandeur of hurrying cloud masses, darkening sea, and coming gloom, announced by the setting sun, with all the power of deep tones of colour. Or look at the "Mills of Dordrecht"; notice first one glimpse of beauty in the colour reflected on the water, right under the bows of the barges on the left. Look well at it, and learn gradually that similar love of beauty is to be found in every corner of the work: it will be a lesson of priceless value. Again, in the work of Corot, we shall find an overflowing love of the scene to be painted, nowhere more thoroughly expressed than in "The Clump of Trees near Ville d'Avray." What a simple subject, merely a clump of trees on the right; near them, towards the centre, two figures; in the middle distance some cattle standing hock-deep in the broad pool, beyond which the rising

ground almost shuts in the scene; not quite, however, for a tiny glimpse of distance beyond tells of miles of light, of warmth, and of atmosphere. The whole work speaks of love of existence, the happiness of nature in warm still weather. And Charles Jacque tells a similar story in his "Plaine de Barbizon;" here again are warmth and repose spoken of in glowing terms of colour. What happiness to be a painter in such a scene! That is the criticism which finds utterance most easily in front of this record of warm-tinted foliage. Mere sensuous pleasure, it may be said; but let it not be forgotten that on that sensuous pleasure is based the extreme of intellect's height, which finds voice in a poet's noblest thought. In "Le Ravin" we find undoubtedly a masterpiece of Courbet, but it does not hang in solitary state, for "Le Puits Noir," which is close by, will also rank high among the works of the Communist painter. At first it presents but a confused mass of green, yet there was beauty in the spot, and it is all recorded, and will be found fully expressed in that painting of the pool which receives its light through a screen of luxuriant foliage.

To Louis Adolphe Hervier we are being introduced, for his work is little known in England; but a picture of "A Village" with a "wood scene" and a "landscape" which hang on either side show us that he is not out of place here. The work is broad even to roughness in parts, but it is the work of a painter and an artist, two terms by no means synonymous. Michel and Segantini, whose pictures contrast on opposite walls, can also be studied to advantage, each being represented by enough work to afford basis for judgment and subsequent admiration. But to treat at length an exhibition of this kind, where each man's work is an earnest expression of his keenest sympathies, within the limits of a newspaper *critique* is impossible. Of the Continental painters there are yet Monticelli, Diaz, Roybet, Troyon, Rousseau, and others to be mentioned; while the work of Peppercorn, J. M. Swan, and Robert Noble calls for consideration. Mr. Noble is, like the earlier masters, intent upon gathering from nature a sense of the beautiful to be found and expressed in colour, and from the examples of his work to be seen he should possess in the future a power of expression of a high order. There are also some pictures by Mr. Muhrman which we have noticed at an earlier date. However, it is better that we advise students of real art to visit these pictures, impelled by a knowledge of the intrinsic value of each, than by advertising a complete list of the painters whose names appear in the catalogue. To the student who does not quite understand the value of the exhibition, or cannot fully appreciate the works, we will say that the fault is his, and his alone. Let him go again, for the art of these painters is not shallow enough to be displayed to the careless eye of a dilettante, nothing less than study will reveal those glimpses of truth with which nature has inspired them.

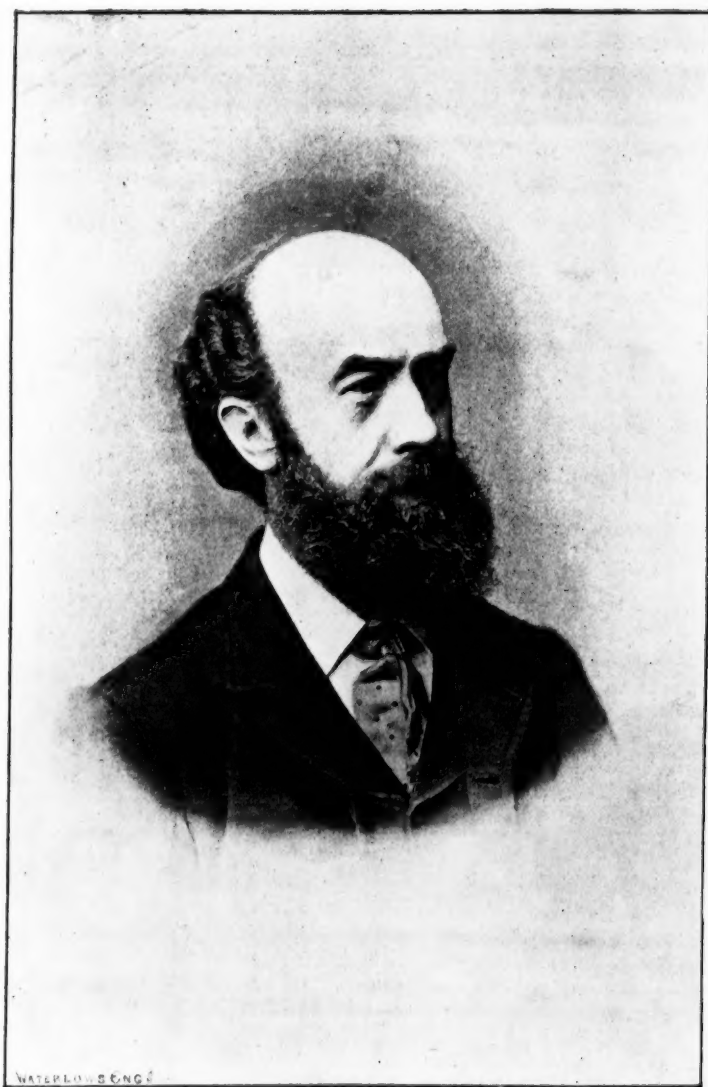
#### FOUR EDINBURGH CONCERTS.

Although we have now reached quite the fag-end of the musical season, we have nevertheless during the last fortnight been favoured with no less than four concerts, two at least of them being of much more than average interest. In order of real importance, however, the place of honour must unhesitatingly be ceded to the annual concert of the Philosophical Institution, held on the 19th inst. in the Music Hall, at which, as has been the case for some years past, both Dr. Joachim and Signor Piatti appeared, in company with Miss Fanny Davies as pianist, and Miss Margaret Hall. The room on this, as usual on all similar occasions, was literally crammed with eager amateurs, and the evening altogether was certainly one of the most enjoyable of the whole musical year. Never had the great artists engaged been heard, both singly and in association, to better advantage. Indeed, taken in its entirety, the concert may be said to have been without a flaw of any kind. Two trios, Brahms' in E flat, Op. 40, originally written for horn in place of the cello, and Mozart in E major, were given in a style not short of perfection, and were received with corresponding enthusiasm by the audience. The rest of the programme was made up of accompanied and unaccompanied instrumental solos, interspersed with several ballads and songs charmingly sung by Miss Hall, who, on this her first appearance in Edinburgh, succeeded in making a distinctly favourable impression. Her voice and her method were both equally admired. Dr. Joachim wisely selected Schumann's Phantasie, op. 131, dedicated to himself, as his solo, and rendered it with such consummate art, technically, and with such richness and depth of poetic

feeling as to create a sense almost of bewilderment as well as of delight in the minds of his listeners, most of whom, it may be added, had had opportunities during the present season of hearing all the more celebrated of Dr. Joachim's contemporaries. A recall could not be declined; in response thereto he gave the last movement of Bach's Violin Sonata in C. Signor Piatti's solo consisted of a Largo and Allemande by Ariosti, which met with so much favour that he also, after some appearance of protest, was compelled to play again, when he substituted Bach's well-known Gavotte and Musette from the 'Cello Suite. Miss Fanny Davies, who has now thoroughly established her claim among Edinburgh amateurs to rank as one of the most competent pianists of her time, played in the first instance three short pieces by Schumann (sketch in F minor), Chopin (Etude in C sharp minor), and Liszt ("Griemeureigew"); and on being recalled she gave Mendelssohn's Staccato Study in E, from the seven characteristic pieces, in which she was heard at her very best, which is saying a good deal. Miss Davies also accompanied Dr. Joachim and Signor Piatti in their solos with conspicuous care and judgment. Two of the four songs with which Miss Hall favoured her hearers—"O, Mistress Mine" (Mary Carmichael) and "Who is Sylvia" (Schubert)—proved so acceptable as to be redemanded, and, in place of the second, she gave a delightful song of Brahms', in which she was cleverly accompanied from memory by Miss Davies. Mr. Henry Hartly efficiently accompanied Miss Hall's other songs. The concert next in musical importance to that of the Philosophical Institution just referred to was the second of the series being given by the new "Edinburgh Quartet" party, and now held in the Queen-street Hall on the evening of the 28th. In many respects it showed a distinct advance upon its predecessor, but the serious offence of giving scraps only of three important works by Spohr, Rubinstein, and Raff, instead of waiting until each could be heard in its entirety, was committed—for the first time certainly, and in the best interests of this new musical venture it is sincerely to be hoped for the last. However, this mistake was in a large measure atoned for by a very creditable performance of Dvřák's Quintet for piano and strings, op. 81, in which Messrs. Daly, Dambinann, Laubach, and F. Gibson (pianoforte) took part. This was the first hearing of the work in Edinburgh, and it was received with every mark of approbation. It possesses many melodic beauties, which are skilfully combined with much national spirit and colouring. Mr. Gibson's judicious treatment of the very effective pianoforte part was worthy of special commendation. Beethoven's string Quartet; No. 2, Op. 18, was also in the programme, but the rendering it received was certainly capable of some improvement. The rest of the concert consisted of some vocal items which were not of a such a nature as to call for any comment. Each of the two remaining concerts still to be noticed was of a somewhat unusual character—one on account of its being the jubilee of one of our oldest local musicians, Mr. Bridgman, and the other in consequence of its being entirely devoted by its organiser, Mr. Bach, to the exposition of the compositions of the little remembered German writer, Loewe. Mr. Bridgman was ably assisted by Mr. Carrodus (violin) and Miss Ghita Corri, as well as by a number of his local *confrères*. The concert was altogether of the miscellaneous and popular type; and, judged from this standpoint, it may be said to have been a success. Mr. Bach's venture was of a totally different kind. This gentleman has become impressed with the belief that much of Johann Carl Loewe's music, his ballads in particular, possesses qualities which, if only it can be secured a hearing and its attractions be made manifest, will serve to rescue it from its all but complete neglect, and make it in a large degree popular at the present time. He essayed consequently on the occasion in question, and with the assistance of a small but efficient body of choristers, to occupy a whole evening with the exposition of selected examples from Loewe's various compositions, chiefly his dramatic ballads, in which the composer certainly appears to most advantage, and which Mr. Bach showed himself capable of rendering with praiseworthy effect. Among the songs thus given by Mr. Bach were the "Erl King," a striking contrast to Schubert's setting; "Harald," "The Fisher," "The Moorish Prince," and "Odin's Seaside," which latter so impressed the audience as to be re-demanded. Loewe's choral writing was illustrated by selections from his oratorio, "The Resurrection of Lazarus," and these were very carefully given by a contingent of Mr. Kinrop's choir. On the whole Mr. Bach's efforts on behalf of the works of the neglected composer whose cause he has so warmly espoused may be said to have met with decided success. That several of the ballads heard at this concert for the first time after years of oblivion will be heard again, and succeed in gaining some degree of contemporary popularity, is more than probable.







DR. GEORGE C. MARTIN.

ORGANIST OF ST. PAUL'S.

From a photograph by WINDOW and GROVE, Baker Street.



## The Organ World.

DR. G. C. MARTIN.

Dr. George Clement Martin, whose portrait is this week given to our readers, was born at Lambourne in 1844. Lambourne, it may not be superfluous to state, is a small village in Berkshire, where the opportunities for musical study were few indeed. There chanced, however, to be in the village church an organ which was unusually fine for such a situation, while the services were equally in advance of those usually given in rural villages. To these facts the boy no doubt owed much, although he had reached his sixteenth year before he thought of adopting music as a profession. When it was found that after a few months' study he was competent to take the ordinary services he was installed as organist at the parish church, and applying himself seriously to work first under a local organist, and later under Dr. Stainer, then organist of Magdalen College, Oxford, made rapid progress. Having in time taken the degree at Oxford of Mus. Bac., he was appointed organist to the Duke of Buccleuch at Dalkeith, which post he held in conjunction with one at a well-known church in Edinburgh until 1874. In the spring of that year he was invited by the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's to assume the post of choir-master, which he accepted, being also appointed sub-organist of the cathedral on the death of Mr. George Cooper. In this post Mr. Martin showed himself possessed to such a large degree of the many qualities necessary to a successful administrator—for the direction of a cathedral choir and its services demands much more than executive ability—that when, in 1888, Dr. Stainer retired from his position as chief organist Mr. Martin was indicated by a remarkable consensus of opinion as the most fit and proper successor to that distinguished musician. It should be said that six years before, the Archbishop of Canterbury had bestowed upon him the degree of Mus. Doc. in recognition chiefly of his services to English church music, a sphere wherein his labours have been neither few nor small, his compositions being marked by strength, originality, and scholarship. Of Dr. Martin's abilities as an organist it would be superfluous and impertinent to speak. Under his guidance the services of the great Cathedral have more than maintained the high level to which they have been raised in the past by the eminent musicians to whom Dr. Martin is so worthy a successor.

### BACH AT ST. PAUL'S.

The annual performance of Bach's Passion music according to St. Matthew at St. Paul's Cathedral took place on Tuesday evening last, when every part of the spacious building was filled by an attentive congregation, amongst whom was the Princess of Wales. The performance, which, on the whole, was one of remarkable excellence, was also distinguished by the use of a second organ as intended by Bach, placed in the south aisle close to the chancel, by means of which the dramatic element so abundantly present in this marvellous work was greatly enforced. This was at once made apparent in the opening double chorus, "Come ye daughters," the force of the interrogative words, "Look where?" and subsequent passages spoken by the second chorus being intensified by the support of instrumental effects independent of those of the first chorus, while in those parts where the two choruses cease from questioning and answering, and join in one common strain of praise, the idea of unity of thought and purpose was more powerfully illustrated. The alto solos, "Thou Blessed Saviour," "Grief for Sin," and those in which many of the passages are too low for a single voice to be effective in so large an area as St. Paul's, were sung by the Cathedral alto choir-boys collectively, and with such admirable precision that it was only the rich body of tone that revealed what was being done. The beautiful recitative, "Although mine eyes," and the air, "Jesus Saviour," were sung with impressive effect by Master Letts, whose powerful and peculiarly round-toned voice seemed to experience no difficulty in penetrating to the utmost recesses of the Cathedral. The tenor solos were sustained by Messrs. Kenningham, Hanson, and Fryer, the artistic singing of the first and last named as the narrators greatly contributing to the impressiveness of the performance. The words of Christ were finely delivered by Mr. Kempton, Mr. Grice taking the part of St. Peter, and Mr. Miles that of

the High Priest. The choir was augmented by contingents from the Westminster Abbey and the Chapels Royal, to the number of about five hundred, assisted by an orchestra of fifty, with Mr. Hodge, sub-organist to the Cathedral, at the great organ, and Mr. Herbert Hodge at the second organ, Dr. Martin, organist of the Cathedral, conducting. The effect of these forces when combined was often grand in the highest sense of the word, and the effect of the fortissimo cry "Barabbas," which has been termed "the inspiration of the work," proportionally great. Dr. Martin, however, might have adopted a slower beat in the allegro choruses with gain to clearness of effect in the body of the church. Little or no attempt was made either to secure any noticeable diminution of tone in those parts of the chorales where the artist instinctively expects pianissimo effects. Exception must also be taken to the use of "brass instruments" in the chorales. The difficulties, however, of rendering such a work in so large a building must be enormous, for the fact cannot be denied that music of so chromatic and subtle a character is unfitted for performance on so large a scale. That Bach's music should attract and interest so huge an assemblage is surely significant of the progress not only of musical culture but also of general mental development; for this work, melodious though it is, appeals primarily to the intellectual and imaginative faculties, and has not those elements of popularity so abundantly present in the music of Handel. Thus the several performances of Bach's Passion music which have been given in so many churches this week and the large congregations which have attended must be hailed as one of the most satisfactory signs of to-day.

### THE BIRMINGHAM TOWN HALL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

The reopening of the organ by the city organist, Mr. C. W. Perkins, on Saturday afternoon proved an event of unusual attraction. Invitations had been sent out to the civic authorities, to organists, to the various musical bodies of the town, and to the fashionable and aristocratic world. The response, as may be imagined, fully realised the expectations of the committee, and the Town Hall was crowded in every part. The company included the Mayor, Baron and Lady Diana Huddleston, the High Sheriff of Warwickshire (Mr. Robbins), Sir Thomas Martineau, Canon Wilkinson, Messrs. Beale, Mathews, Johnstone, Holder, and the prominent members of the Corporation. The Town Hall organ, which was built some fifty years ago by Mr. William Hill, has now been reconstructed by Messrs. W. Hill and Son at a cost of over £3,000, this sum being obtained without recourse to any public appeal. Hitherto the Town Hall organ had been the property of the General Hospital, at whose expense the organ was originally erected, had been under their control, and had been played upon by the organists appointed by the hospital. From to-day the control of the organ passes into the hands of the Municipality, the General Hospital still retaining its proprietary rights, and proper provisions being made for the protection of these rights, especially with reference to festival purposes. During the interval the Mayor was asked by Sir Thomas Martineau to take over the control of the organ on behalf of the City Council, in token of which a golden key was handed to his Worship. The organ may now claim to rank among the finest in the world, as already in 1834, when it was built, it shared a right with the organ of York to be considered the largest in the world. Larger and greater organs have since then been built in all parts of the world, but we doubt if the Birmingham Town Hall organ in its present state will be surpassed for mellowness of tone and for its diapason quality. Tubular pneumatic action has been applied throughout, and all the latest improvements have been added. The blowing power is now supplied by four hydraulic engines. Thirty-seven new stops have been added, making now a total of 68. Among the new exquisitely-toned stops we may mention the *voix céleste* and *Salcional* of the Swell organ; the *Wald flöte* (Forest flute), the *Lieblich gedacht* of the choir organ; the delicious *vox humana*; the *Rohr flöte* of the solo organ; the superb *Bourdon* of the pedal organ. Mr. Perkins during his recital brought out the qualities of these various stops and the inimitable combinations of the registers, showing to perfection the instrument's capabilities. In the interest of the readers of "The Organ World" I here give the programme of the first organ recital thus given:—Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor (Bach), "Giusto Ciel" (Best), Sonata in D Major (Mendelssohn), Air with variations (Smart), Bridal Procession March (Wagner), and Overture, "Jubilee" (Weber).

## The Dramatic World.

### "HENRY IV., PART I."

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 2ND APRIL, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDMOUSE,—

You will correct me if I am wrong when I say that Shakespeare wrote three dozen plays save two; of which plays, until last Saturday afternoon, I had seen just twenty-four, thus lacking ten of the complete set. On Saturday I had the chance of seeing Part the First of "Henry IV." performed, and took it; thus bringing down my unseen plays to nine and a half.

"Antony and Cleopatra" has been acted in London during my time, and, I think, "Cymbeline," for a *matinée* or so; but I missed both. The other part of "Henry IV." I have never had the opportunity of seeing, nor any part of "Henry VI.," nor "Richard II." "Pericles, Prince of Tyre" and "All's Well that Ends Well" have not revisited the glimpses of the lamps since the time of Phelps and Sadler's Wells; while "Troilus and Cressida," "Timon of Athens," and "Titus Andronicus" are—as is but natural and fitting—birds very unlikely to be seen on the wing nowadays.

Eight other plays I have seen but once apiece—and, of those, one ("Julius Caesar") only in German, and one only played by amateurs. There are, indeed, not more than nine of Shakespeare's which can now be said really to hold our stage, while perhaps half-a-dozen more are put up for a run now and then. Wonderful enough it is, of course, that so many works of three centuries ago should still be found interesting and intelligible to an ordinary audience. Remember that not one single play by any one of his great contemporaries now lives upon the stage; the last to die was "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," which it is scarce likely that a new Edmund Kean will resuscitate.

So that the opportunity of seeing now and again nearly one-half of the plays which Shakespeare wrote should make us rejoice with never a murmur—were it not for the marvellous quality of those which we are doomed not to see. Think, that—if I am not mistaken—there has hardly been a single chance of beholding on the London stage, in English, since Phelps retired from Sadler's Wells, the tragedy which many readers hold to be Shakespeare's masterpiece: the terrible, glorious "King Lear!" I still remember the thunderstorm upon the heath, which I heard as a boy—now thirty years ago, good Master Fieldmouse—and the battle, and the poor Fool who died, and Kent in the stocks; and the play has always been more vivid to me for this memory. But is it not a sin that the only man who has revived this tragedy for us, who has tried to aid our imaginings of its wonderful pictures, was an Italian, Ernesto Rossi?

(As I write, the thought comes to me that perhaps an American, Edwin Booth, also "went on for the part"—as actors say when they mean to be specially satirical; but, with the best goodwill, I could not undertake to go and see Booth as Lear.)

And then, I don't think that "Julius Caesar" has been played in a West-end theatre since Phelps played it at Sadler's Wells—which is not West-end at all; and other splendid plays one sees but now and then, acted inadequately in a hole and corner way; and it makes one sad, and envious of the cultured Germans.

Do you know what they do in Germany, or have done, once and again? They have played, as a series, night after night, the entire cycle of King-plays: the "Histories" from King John to Henry the Eighth. Fancy the grand procession of living, speaking men and women from that rich and coloured past: fancy what a

sumptuous way is here, of learning history from that great chronicle whence alone Marlborough said that he had gained his knowledge of his country's past! Even our energetic Mr. Benson has given us no such treat as this: and I should like respectfully to submit the project to his consideration.

I need not tell you, then, how grateful I was when a daring body of amateurs—the Irving Club—proposed to give us a play entirely unseen in England (I believe) since the days of Phelps; though I am bound to own that I looked forward to an instructive, an interesting, and a very dull afternoon. (Forgive my pleasant paradoxical way. You see what I mean; and I do mean it.)

But really I was not bored at all. I had, to begin with, forgotten Mr. Irving; his royal way of placing all the resources of the Lyceum at the disposal of the amateurs made an incalculable difference in the result which was attained. But, apart from that, their success in their tremendous attempt was really astonishing. They made a history-play—a thing completely "gone out" now—interesting from end to end, I won't indeed say to an ordinary audience, but to all those who knew and loved their Shakespeare.

Of all history-plays that we know, this of "Henry IV" is in its form and structure the most curious. Its ten acts only tell the story of an unsuccessful—and very undramatic—rebellion against the King, with his death and his son's accession to the throne: while between these scenes of history are sandwiched others, longer and much more interesting, in which are shown the mad freaks of Prince Henry and his boon companions. These might be left out, almost every line of them, without affecting the progress of the History; which, moreover, their chronology upsets in the most extraordinary way. Between scenes in which weeks, months, perhaps even years elapse, there is strung a series of scenes divided only—as the characters in them plainly state—by hours. But Shakespeare's daring method of dealing with time is a very large subject; which, moreover, was pretty exhaustively discussed, some years ago, by the New Shakespeare Society.

This by the way; I mention it only to show how difficult a play to deal with, and to make interesting, the Irving Amateur Dramatic Club were bold enough to choose. Let me repeat that their boldness was well justified. Honour is due to all of them—to every one—for the way in which they worked, together and individually. Throughout the play there was not one hitch of any kind; and throughout the play there was not one actor who did not make himself heard, with ease, in the large Lyceum Theatre—a great feat for an amateur dealing with Shakespeare's long and difficult speeches. I am quite sure that I did not follow many of the gentlemen in the "Dead Heart" nearly so easily; and that is Watts Phillips, whose characters answer ever to the purpose, easy things to understand.

I don't propose to criticise individuals much; I have seen too little of the amateur acting of late years to judge them by its standard, and it would be manifestly unfair to rate them as professionals. One gentleman, however, I must praise without reserve—the stage manager, a Mr. H. D. Shepard; his task must have been a tremendous one, and he executed it, considering his materials, wonderfully. Scenes—thanks doubtless to Mr. Irving—dresses and make-up, all were throughout excellent. I noticed, indeed, that many faces had a more historical and lifelike look than those of our professional actors, with their elaborate and imaginative makes-up; and this, I suppose, was because the faces were not of the actor-type—which is even more recognisable and defined than the barrister, the doctor, or even the parson-type.

A few words I must give to two or three of those who acted the heaviest parts. For an amateur to play Falstaff is obviously impossible, and in the first scene it looked as if Mr. Littleton were



going to fail terribly: he spoke in an ordinary, modern, light-tenor voice, and laughed incessantly—a thing which no man of Falstaff's humour does. But later he recovered surprisingly, and went through his scenes with a great deal of understanding and a certain humour.

Mr. Frank Halden, the Hotspur, also improved greatly as he went on. At first he seemed only to be trying (with much success) to beat the record for pace in Hotspur's enormous speeches; later, he played with great force and intelligence, and, when necessary, was even quiet. (And Mr. Halden's voice is as the voice of Tamagno.)

Most admirable was the King, Mr. Arthur Ayres; a splendid performance of a most trying part. Mr. Ayres has an excellent voice, a thorough and genuine knowledge of elocution. Yet, strange to say, even he has not an ear for verse; will you believe me when I tell you that he said—

The edge of war, like an ill-sheath'd knife;  
and, later in the play, instead of

Enlarged him and made a friend of him—  
packed his "enlarged" into two syllables.

But I grow critical; let me only add that I was sorry that the amateurs marred, in a way, the symmetry of their performance by entrusting at least two important parts to "professionals;" though I quite admit that no amateur could have given us a Prince Hal as graceful and as natural as Mr. Webster's.

So—with a word of commendation to Miss Eleanor Rees for her excellent singing of a barbaric Welsh ditty—let me rest

Your well satisfied  
MUS IN URBE.

### MIRACLE PLAYS.

The current number of "Longman's Magazine" contains an interesting article by Mr. Edward Clodd on the above subject, from which we make the following extracts:—

With the exception of a few isolated specimens, most of which have been printed, the English Miracle Plays are comprised in four series, known respectively as the York, the Chester, the Coventry, and the Towneley. . . . The feature common to the four series is their grouping of the leading events narrated in the Bible into a consecutive whole, but with manifold differences, both in the less important parts and in the proportion of plays based on legends outside the canonical books. For example, the popular mediæval legend of the "Fall of Lucifer," which has great prominence given to it in the "Cursor Mundi," a Northumbrian poem written early in the fourteenth century, and of which Milton makes effective use in "Paradise Lost," is the subject of a play in the York and Chester series, but is absent from the Coventry and Towneley. The Coventry series has no plays founded on the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, but has several founded on those of the New Testament; whilst in the Chester series, only one play, based on the legend of Christ's Descent into Hell, has its source in the apocryphal writings.

As hinted already, when the plays were rendered into the vulgar tongue, a good many extraneous elements were introduced, according to the skill and humour of the transcribing adapter, and according to the audience whose appetite had to be whetted. Thus the Chester "Banes" (a word retained in our marriage *bans* or *banns*) tell how Done Rondall, "Monke of the Abay."

In pagentes set fourth apparently to all eyne,  
The Olde and Neue Testament with lively comforth,  
Interminglinge therewith, onely to make sporte,  
Some thinges not warranted by any writt,  
Which to gladd the hearers he woulde men to take yt.

In the Miracle Play of "St. Nicholas," written by Hilarius, an English monk of the twelfth century, the conversation of pothouse gamblers is the ninth-provoking incident. In a yet earlier play, by the nun Hrosvitha,

the persecutor of three virgin-martyrs is represented as stricken with madness, and as embracing dripping-pans and all kinds of cooking utensils, till his own soldiers, taking him for a devil, maltreat him. In the Towneley series, Cain brawls and bullies his hind like a coarse Yorkshire farmer; Noah's wife (as also in the York and Chester series) is a termagant, and the quarrels between the couple are full of comic dialogue. In the play of the "Angels and the Shepherds," where the materials are slender, advantage is seized on to introduce abundance of rustic realism. In the York series Judas is ridiculed by a porter; Pilate outwits a squire, who sells a plot of land for thirty pieces of silver paid to the traitor, and who gives up the deeds without securing the money. In many of the plays in which the devil is a character he appears only to be laughed at. The anachronisms and classical allusions are amusing, as when Noah's wife swears by Christ, by the Virgin Mary, and by St. John; Pharaoh and Cæsar Augustus by "Mahoune," and Balak by Mars; when Herod asks his council what they find "in Vyrghyll, in Homere," concerning the birth of Christ, and promises to make one of his councillors Pope; and when the Sibyl prophesies before Octavius of Jesus and the Judgment. Touches of current life and usage here and there stand out amid the ancient story; the carpenter's tools and measurements used by Noah, as well as those employed at the Crucifixion; the bitter cold weather at the Nativity, telling of a truly northern Christmas; the quaint offerings of the shepherds when they repair to "Bedleme" to give the Divine babe a "lytyle spruse cofer," a ball, and a bottle; the ruin of the poor by murrain; the drinking between Pilate and his wife; the excellent representation of a heavy manual job by a set of rough workmen in the Crucifixion. Illustrative, too, of English customs and forms of justice are the borrowing of the town beast; Judas offering himself as bondman in his remorse; the mortgage of a property, raising money by "wedde-sette" or pledge; and the trial scene in certain plays, in which Pilate "in Parlament playne" vindicates the course of law in a way that would commend itself to the learned author of "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality," and puts down the malice of the accuser, Caiaphas, and the pursuer Annas (cf. "York Mystery Plays, Introd. by Miss Toulmin Smith, lvii.). The account-books of the several guilds show that the actors were paid according to the length of their parts and "business," not according to their dignity. Thus, in a play setting forth the Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus, the impersonators of Herod and Caiaphas received 3s. 4d. each, of Annas 2s. 2d., and of Jesus 2s.; which was also the sum paid to each actor in the parts of his executioners. The tariff varies for acting the character of God; sometimes it is 2s., at other times, as in the Drapers' Pageant of "Doomsday" at Coventry, "hym that playeth Goddes parte" had 3s. 4d. Pilate has as much 4s., his wife (Dame Procula) 2s., the Devil and Judas 1s. 6d. each. Peter was paid 1s. 4d., the two damsels 12d., while Fauston, the hangman of Judas, receives 5d., and for cock-crowing 4d.

### THE DRAMATISTS.

#### XXIX.—MORETO. "DISDAIN AGAINST DISDAIN."

Moreto, as has been said, was constantly accused of plagiarism; and, if one may judge by his best-known play, the stupid old charge was brought against him with less justice, even, than usual.

"El Desden con el Desden"—Disdain against Disdain—is commonly said to be an imitation of Lope de Vega's "Dog in the Manger," of which a summary was lately given. The most, however, that can be claimed for De Vega is that the leading ideas of the two pieces are alike—and the leading ideas of the two pieces are not in the least alike.

In both pieces the story is exactly told by the name. "The Dog in the Manger" is a lady who does not care for a man till she finds that someone loves him. "Disdain against disdain" shows the victory of a lover who opposes coldness to the coldness of his mistress.

There is a tournament held at the Court of Don Diego, Prince of Barcelona, and all comers are vanquished by one Don Cæsar, a prince who is piqued into love by the contempt with which Diego's daughter, Donna Diana, beholds his doughty deeds. Acting on the advice of Polilla, the princess's secretary, Cæsar determines to vanquish her by a pride greater than her own. Polilla tells him gleefully how by a pretended misogyny he has made himself courted by all the ladies of the place.

Don Diego promises an audience of his haughty daughter to Don Cæsar, Prince Louis of Bearne, and Gaston, Count de Foix, though the first coldly

declares that he has no mind for wooing. In the second scene—the Princess's salon—the gentlemen are introduced, after a little chat between Diana, her cousins Laura and Fenise, her maid Floretta, and the grumbling Polilla, whom Floretta woes in vain. To the fine speeches of Louis and Gaston Diana replies by declaring her contempt for love; but she is evidently piqued by Caesar's hearty agreement with her views. As she goes, Caesar owns to Polilla that the struggle to conceal his love is almost beyond his strength.

In Act the Second Polilla tells him that the first step is won—Diana is determined to make him fall in love with her. Then the ladies arrange for a coming festivity—the drawing of lots, by which a knight is assigned to each lady; and the Princess determines that Fate shall be aided in its decision. So Fenise chooses Gaston's colour, Laura takes Louis, Floretta Polilla, and Diana reserves Caesar for herself. Then she lavishes all her sweetness upon him, trying to draw him on to a declaration of love which she may repulse with scorn; but, aided by Polilla's quiet speeches of counsel and encouragement, he sternly keeps down his feelings.

The lots are drawn, and it is at once plain that Louis and Gaston are not inclined to quarrel with the decree of fate. But, when he is left alone with the partner chance has given him, Caesar's passion overcomes him, and he throws himself wildly at her feet. She laughs at him, triumphantly; all seems lost; when, with a final effort, he makes her believe that his pleading was mere acting—he actually makes her ashamed that she was taken in by such trickery. She owns that as an actor he is her master; and even applauds, as strokes of irony, some earnest words which again escape from him. More, she angrily accepts as true his declaration that he would rather not be at the trouble of acting as her escort through the masquerade; and so dismisses him.

She consults Polilla, who is secretly delighted at the Prince's progress, and lays a plot to fascinate him with her lute-playing in a lovely garden. This the next scene shows us; but Diana's simple trickery comes to nought.

Act the Third begins by showing the Princess how both Laura and Fenise are beloved, though she is not. She tries to awake Caesar's jealousy by telling him that she loves Louis; where to he replies that he loves Laura! This is almost too much for her, and she indignantly reproves his choice. Now at length she confesses to herself, and indeed to Polilla, that she loves.

After love scenes between the two other pairs, Polilla persuades them to enter into a little conspiracy against the Princess; and Louis and Laura, in following scenes, respectively thank her for her declared love to the one and tell her of Caesar's proposal to the other. Then the poor woman's pride is utterly broken down, and she owns the truth.

In a last scene, Caesar before all the Court asks Don Diego for his daughter's hand; and she with shame allows that her love has gone out to him who has known how to overcome pride with pride. Caesar owns the stratagem by which he won; and Diana, overjoyed to find that in truth he loved her from the beginning, forgives the confidential servant—her secretary Polilla—who betrayed all her confidences. And then, as Gaston takes his Fenise and Louis his Laura, the wily Polilla allows a half promise of marriage to be wrung out of him by Floretta—whom in his heart he dearly loves.

#### NOTES AND NEWS.

Another *matinée*, another piece which "went" pretty well and is already forgotten; another waste, it is to be feared, of time, and work, and money—yet not a performance altogether thrown away was that of "Pedigree," a farcical comedy by Messrs. Clement Bowring and F. H. Court, produced at Toole's Theatre on the afternoon of Friday last—a lovely day, when all should have been out a-walking. Yet, in that hot theatre, our time was not absolutely wasted. In the play itself a little oasis of fairly written dialogue now and then showed green in the plotless waste; the acting was all good—Messrs. Righton, Compton Countts, Lablache, and Yorke Stephens, and Misses May Jocelyn (a very bright little body) and Sylvia Grey, all doing their best with more or less thankless parts: and, much more than all this, one young actress had a good chance, and availed herself of it so brilliantly that her position on the London stage should from this afternoon forth be a far higher one than she has yet had the luck to occupy. As a French adventuress, who is really an English actress of unimpeachable propriety but slangy manners, Miss Vane Featherstone

played altogether brilliantly, with a perfect accent and an astonishing sense of fun. Miss Featherstone, at least, should have reason to bless the man who invented *matinées*.

A scholarly little play in the "Universal Review" is very well worth reading, the more as we are likely before long to have the chance of seeing it acted. This is "Kit Marlowe's Death," by Mr. W. L. Courtney, well known at Oxford; and it is soon to be played at a *matinée*, they say, with Mr. Bouchier—late of Oxford—in the principal part. The little sketch is dramatic, though it needs rare acting; for reading, the great number of quotations—from Marlowe himself, and Chettle and others—struck us as a blemish. But an average audience would probably not know that it was being quoted at.

Two Tony Lumpkins are soon to be in the field and two Kate Hardcastles and Young Marlows. Both the Criterion and the Vaudeville threaten us with "She Stoops to Conquer"—perhaps the most charming comedy that Shakespeare did not write. It is a little curious, in these days of "stars," to find a star-actor contenting himself with Young Marlow; not that he is not an admirable part, sure to be admirably played by Mr. Charles Wyndham.

Mr. Herkomer, "of the Herkomer Theatre, Bushey, Herts," coming down to adaptations from the French and farces! This is sad indeed. Where be your opportunities for an unparalleled harvest-moon in a farce? What true Briton (like Mr. Herkomer, you know) would care to compose original Wagnerian music for an adaptation from the French; or even to act therein, or paint scenery therefor? (For "he paints, too," as Whistler said of Another.) We merely do not believe it. It is an invention of the enemy.

So Mr. Leonard Boyne and Miss Ada Ferrar go to the Adelphi: a most promising young actress, and a fine actor, who at that home of the strongest drama is pretty certain to cure himself of what is almost his only fault—a tendency to be over-deliberate.

Daly's company is to reappear in London, this time at the Lyceum, on the tenth of June; and we are promised "As You Like It," with Miss Ada Rehan. These be good news, indeed; and with this in view we will bravely endure "Dollars and Sense," and Mr. Daly's other mild frivolities from the German.

Easter Monday is to see an entire change of programme at St. George's Hall. Mr. Malcolm Watson—"of the First Part," as the lawyers say—is to give us a new entertainment called "Carnival Time," with music by Mr. Corney Grain, which gentleman, for the Second Part, will tell us all about "Tommy at College."

"For Her Child's Sake," by the late Sir Charles Young, is a piece not without prettiness; but when we saw it at Terry's Theatre the other evening there was hissing among the gods at the fall of the curtain. Why, we do not know. Many worse pieces, worse acted, nightly escape hissing; but perhaps something in the subject of the piece—your gallery is curiously moral—or perhaps a certain weakness brought down this condemnation. And then it is a little comedy which needs almost tragedians to act it; and one seldom finds tragedians at play during the half hour which precedes the "piece of the evening." Indeed in this *lever du rideau* the pleasantest part is that played by a Mr. A. Ellis, an actor of quaint old gentlemen—new, we think, to London, and clever.

#### FOREIGN NOTES.

A paragraph has appeared lately in "Le Ménestrel" and in various American papers with reference to a certain person described as Emil Naumann, Director of the Berlin Conservatorium, who is said to have been arrested on certain very serious charges. The paragraph in question is entirely erroneous. In the first place the Emil Naumann whom the writers suppose to be alluded to, and whom they pretend to identify by various titles and descriptions, died last year at Dresden. The person really accused and under arrest is Emil Neumann, the head of a quite insignificant private musical academy, and in no way whatever connected with the deceased.



The sixty-seventh Lower Rhine Festival will take place at Dusseldorf, beginning on May 25, and is to be conducted by Herr Richter, assisted by Herr Julius Butts. Among the works to be executed are Mendelssohn's "Elijah," the first part (Spring) of Haydn's "Seasons," a Whitsun Cantata by Bach, the Jupiter Symphony of Mozart, and Schumann's second, in C major, with overtures by Cherubini, Beethoven, and Wagner. Brahms' "Rhapsodie," with alto solo, is apparently the only important work by a living composer. Among the artists are to be Fräulein Pia v. Sicherer, Hermine Spies, and MM. Gudehus, Litzinger, and Perron.

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Reinthal's opera, "Käthchen v. Heilbronn," originally produced at Frankfurt on December 7, 1881, has just been brought out at the Berlin Opera House with, apparently, no very great success. The opera is derived from the play by H. v. Kleist, which was so admirably performed in London in 1881 by the Meiningen theatrical company. Herr Reinthaler has been heard here as a musician through his oratorio, "Jephtha and his Daughter," which was performed in 1856 at the old St. Martin's Hall, under Mr. Hullah, but the work made no lasting impression, and is now almost forgotten.

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Felix Weingartner, Court-Capellmeister at Mannheim, and one of the most active and energetic of the young musicians of Germany, who are fast destroying the prejudice which once taught the world to regard the title "Kapellmeister" as a word of contempt, has just produced an original work at Mannheim. It is another setting of that already so-often-set poem of Heine, "Die Wallfahrt nach Kevlar"—this time for alto solo, and orchestra. The work was well received and is very favourably spoken of.

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According to some authorities the University of Prague has conferred on Herr Dvůrák the title of Honorary Doctor of Laws. Others say that the University, in view of the great reputation of some late and living Bohemian composers, is seeking to acquire the power to confer the degree of Doctor of Music, and that if this is accomplished the degree will then be conferred on Herr Dvůrák. We imagine that the composer would greatly prefer this course.

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It appears to be a fact—and, if so, it is a very curious fact—that, notwithstanding the intimate connection between Goethe's play of "Egmont" and the city of Brussels, the play has never yet been performed in that city. It is now proposed to perform the play in the French version recently made by M. Aderer, and with Beethoven's music; the orchestra to be conducted, as in Paris, by M. Lamoureux, if the services of that gentleman can be secured.

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The new opera "Zaire," by M. Veronge de la Nux, will almost immediately be put in rehearsal at the Paris Grand Opéra. The part of Lusignan is to be played by M. Escalais, but the allotment of the other parts is not yet decided on. After "Zaire" will come M. Massenet's "Le Mage."

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The "Perseveranza" of Milan professes to have heard from Munich that Mme. Wagner has given her consent to some performances of "Parsifal" being given this year at the Munich Opera House. We shall await corroboration of this statement before crediting it.

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The third and concluding volume of "Les Artistes Musiciens Belges," au XVIII<sup>e</sup> et au XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle, by M. Ed. Gregoir, a work the first volume of which appeared in 1845, and the second in 1857, has just been published.

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The latest theatrical fire is that announced from Bromberg, where the town theatre was destroyed on the 24th of March.

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A new musical periodical will be brought out at Berlin in April by the well-known publishing firm of Trautwein. It is to be edited by Herr Oscar Eichberg.

Transcendental epochs are necessary to progress, but they ought to leave us long intervals for hard, undoubting labour.—*Thoughts about Art.*

## NOTES FROM ROME.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

ROME, MARCH 29.

We are in Lent, and therefore abstain, not from meat (for his Holiness, taking into consideration the depressed physical condition of the faithful caused by the influenza period, has been pleased to grant an indulgence from fasting) but from music. At all events, our abstinence from opera is complete; the Theatre Argentina is closed. A few concerts have taken place during the past fortnight, but not very important ones. Yesterday evening (28th) Madame Metaura Torricelli, the violinist, gave a concert, and I am told that her playing was excellent, though she had a small and somewhat cold audience. She has a beautifully soft quality of tone, and competent critics consider her playing more purely classical in style than that of Teresina Tua, who, by the way, since her marriage with Count Franchi has retired from public life, and lives here in Rome.

Vico Rodolfi, a young pianist who has lately finished his studies, gave a successful concert the other day; also the Sisters Millotti (one a pianist, pupil of Sgambati, the other a singer) have given their annual concert. To-day the Orchestral Society announce their second performance: an overture of Rameau, Beethoven's C Minor Symphony, and a new overture by Vessella, the director of an orchestra here.

Rossini's "Stabat Mater" is to be performed on Monday next by very eminent artists.

At Urbino, on the 28th, the anniversary of Raphael's birthday, the town paid a graceful tribute to the memory of the painter. A discourse was held by Professor Cantalamessa in the University on the subject "The Raphaelites at Bologna," and afterwards a large procession of students, professors, citizens, and those in authority over them marched to the house of Raphael and deposited wreaths and crowns of flowers. The town was decorated with flags, as if in honour of royalty.

Apropos of Raphael I must mention an instance of sublime self-conceit on the part of an Italian 'Arry. The other day on the tomb of Raphael here in Rome in the Pantheon Church, I saw inscribed in pencil the name of a visitor, thus: "Vincenzo L.—pittore!" I have not seen any of "Vincenzo's" paintings, but he evidently has a bold style. Let us rejoice that he is not English!

Another anniversary has been commemorated at Milan by the students of the Accademia Letteraria, the anniversary of the death of Paolo Ferrari, the dramatist, who died a year ago. They have published a book (small unique edition) containing an unfinished and unpublished work of the late writer. It is a drama of which he had written only three acts. The title is "Shakespeare," and our poet is the leading character in the play, supposed to take place when he came to London as a young man and after beginning to write for the Blackfriars theatre gave up classical traditions and left the beaten tracks in play writing. The historical background of Ferrari's drama is furnished by the politics and the love affairs of Queen Elizabeth, who plays an important part throughout. Literary colouring is given by the classical and euphuistic elements in vogue at the period; the former represented by some of the Queen's ladies and an imaginary personage named David Lee, a dramatic author; the latter by the Court, especially by Albert, son of Lord Southampton, a young and timid lover of the Queen. Other important characters are those of Lord Southampton himself, Bacon, Ben Jonson, and Ariella. The prize of 10,000 francs for the best drama in Italian has been adjudged by the Commission of the *Concorso Drammatico* to two authors whose merits are considered equal. The money is to be divided equally by the two writers, viz., Cavallotti, for his play "Agatodémon" (noticed in "The Musical World" in January), and Ferrari (mentioned above) for his "Fulvio Testi." There were fourteen competitors in all. Two works were not accepted because they had not stood the test of a performance in public and one other was also excluded from the competition because it was decided to be an adaptation from a novel (the terms of the competition being expressly to exclude "adaptations or translations from other works"). A second prize of 4,000 francs was awarded to "Esmeralda" (by Gallina), and one of 1,000 francs to "Di notte," by Salvatore Lopez.

High art consists neither in altering nor in improving nature; but in seeking throughout nature for "whatsoever things are lovely, and whatsoever things are pure" . . . and directing the thoughts of others to them by gentle emphasis.—*Ruskin.*



## VIEUXTEMPS' CONCERTO AND MR. YSAË.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR: I wish, with your kind permission, to call the attention of your readers to some matters connected with M. YsaË's performance at the last Philharmonic concert which have been only partly or insufficiently insisted upon. In the first place I do not consider that Vieuxtemps' concerto in D minor has met with altogether fair treatment at the hands of those who are supposed to direct public opinion. Latter-day critics are apt to forget that the work was written at a time when—with the sole exceptions of the Beethoven and Mendelssohn violin concertos—the concerto form was treated as a means to an end, that end being the display of the capabilities of the solo instrument. It is of course quite possible that a work written under these conditions should be as satisfactory in an artistic as in a technical sense, but I submit with all diffidence that this much-to-be-desired union of artistic and technical perfection has not yet been attained. As an exposition of the possibilities of the violin in the hands of such an artist as M. YsaË—an artist of such transcendent powers as to move to enthusiasm a Philharmonic audience—the concerto in D minor is a great work, and I am not even sure that, considered simply as music, it merits the wholesale condemnation which has been freely lavished upon it. Again, the extraordinary powers of M. YsaË have hardly been estimated at their true value. We are visited annually by great violinists, who are also in some respects specialists. One is the acknowledged interpreter, *par excellence*, of, let us say, Beethoven and Bach. Another is famous for the silvery quality of his tone and the certainty of his intonation, and so on. M. YsaË combines in a degree unexampled in the present generation the qualities which make up the great artist. His tone is very powerful and of the finest quality, his intonation perfect, his phrasing refined and free from exaggeration, and his bowing—well, Vieuxtemps in his best days was not more successful in dealing with this concerto. His reading of the Prelude and Gavotte by Bach may not have been in consonance with the views of those who have accepted that of Herr Joachim as the only possible one; but the real question at issue is how far the individuality of the executant is to be subordinated to the assumed intention of the composer.

Yours faithfully,

A STRUGGLING VIOLA PLAYER.

## CONCERTS.

## LONDON AND SUBURBAN.

It was fortunate that the second Philharmonic programme included such works as Haydn's Symphony "La Reine de France;" a Prelude and Gavotte for violin, by Bach; Bennett's "Naiades" overture, and the Prelude to Wagner's "Meistersinger"—they made up, to some extent, for the disappointment caused by the novelties. Of these the most important, an orchestral selection from the music to "Charlotte Corday" by Mr. Peter Benoit, was also the most deserving of condemnation. The numbers given were an Overture, "Idyll," "Ball-scene," and "Revolutionary Funeral March," in all of which the composer's talent—we had almost written "genius"—for orchestration is wasted on musical material which, whatever its fitness in a theatre, ought never to have found place in a Philharmonic programme. As this music will probably never be heard again here we need not waste space on a description of its sensational effects. Mr. Benoit conducted, and was the recipient of applause obviously meant for himself, and not for his music. The remaining novelties, sung by Mr. Blauwaert, were an air, "Le minnezanger," by Huberti, which struck one as pretentious rather than powerful, theatrical rather than dramatic; and an Invocation and a "Berceuse" by the same composer, of which the former seemed to deserve better treatment than was meted to it by the singer, and some one—name not mentioned—who produced some dismal sounds from the organ. M. YsaË, who on his first visit last year was recognised as a violinist of the highest rank, selected for his reappearance Vieuxtemps' D minor concerto, a piece bristling with difficulties, and magnificently adapted for the display of executive skill,

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but, with the exception perhaps of its slow movement, otherwise of very little musical value. M. YsaË's performance was a veritable triumph, and we can only regret that a more musically important work was not chosen. The artist's phenomenal command over his instrument was further shown in Bach's Prelude and Gavotte in E, and, still more convincingly, in one of the most beautiful and difficult of Paganini's studies. Mr. Cowen secured an admirable rendering of Bennett's Overture, a fairly good one of the Symphony, and a very tame one of Wagner's Prelude. At the next concert on the 24th inst. Dvůrák will conduct his new Symphony in D, and the Russian pianist, Mr. Sapellnikoff, will play Henselt's Concerto in B minor.

The second concert of the Wind Instrument Chamber Music Society took place at the Royal Academy of Music on Friday evening last, the 28th ult., before an audience sufficiently numerous and appreciative to show that these concerts supply a felt deficiency in our musical life. Music for wind instruments has lately been so little cultivated in England that the society can have no difficulty in providing works almost unknown to the majority of concert-goers. This description will certainly apply to the first piece performed, a quintett for piano, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon by H. v. Herzogenberg. This work, though no opus number was given to it in the programme, we believe it to be the composer's Op. 43, and to date from six years back. It is a melodious and pleasing work, without pretensions to originality or depth, but agreeably treated, though the great predominance of triple time throughout becomes somewhat monotonous. The second instrumental item was Beethoven's pretty Trio for Flute, violin, and viola, which has only been performed once at the Popular Concerts, and certainly deserves more frequent hearing. It was admirably executed by Messrs. Vivian, Müller, and Krause. The final piece was an Octett, Op. 32, for five strings, clarinet, and two horns, by Spohr; full of the sweet and flowing, but rather too superficial melody of which the old master had such an abundant store. The place of the slow movement is occupied by some variations on the "Harmonious Blacksmith," the melody of which Spohr quotes incorrectly. Mr. Braxton Smith sang with taste Meyerbeer's "Schäfers Lied" (with clarinet accompaniment exquisitely played by Mr. G. A. Clinton), Lassen's "All Souls' Day," and Kjerulf's "My Heart and Lute."

Beethoven's "Mount of Olives" was the principal ingredient in the programme of last Saturday's Crystal Palace Concert. The most noticeable feature in the performance of the work was the singing of the Crystal Palace choir, which showed marked improvement on its previous efforts. The soloists were Miss Annie Marriott, Mr. Henry Piercy, and Mr. Watkin Mills, of whom the last named also sang in excellent style the solo in Dr. Bridge's hymn "Rock of Ages," which refined and effective work was also in the programme. The orchestral works were Mendelssohn's "Reformation" Symphony and the academic overture to Macfarren's "St. John the Baptist." It may be easily believed that of both these Mr. Manns' orchestra gave admirable renderings.

The final Saturday Popular of the season, which took place last week, calls for but little comment. Beethoven's Quintet in C, with the addition of Mr. Gibson to the usual quartet, opened the proceedings, and the same composer's Serenade Trio, Op. 8, brought them a close. Herr Joachim gave his well-known rendering of the Romance in F, accompanied by Signor Romili, and as an encore played the companion work in G. Mdlle. Janotha chose the "Moonlight" sonata as her solo, of which her reading was quiet and unassuming. In response to prolonged applause she played what we suppose must be looked upon as her favourite "extra" piece, judging by the frequency with which she selects it—Chopin's Funeral March, of which her reading is fanciful in a marked degree. Whatever may be thought of other licenses, we cannot approve the persistence with which she avoids all accent on the first note of the second bar of the second strain in D flat major. The note is the last of an ascending passage, and every instinct calls out for some little stress on it; but in apparently capricious defiance of natural expectations the note is played in each instance scarcely audibly. Mr. Norman Salmond, who was capitally accompanied by his wife, sang "O ruddier than the cherry," and a real little gem of a song by Battison Haynes called "Goodnight," an English version of some German words in which the shadowy, dreamy sorrowfulness of the original is well preserved, a spirit that is charmingly reflected in the music, and which the singer caught like a true artist.

The "Pop" season was concluded on Monday with a concert which calls for little comment. Opening with Mozart's Quintet in G minor and closing with the Quintet of Schumann in E flat, the intermediate items included Spohr's attractive Concerto in B minor for two violins, then heard for the first time at these concerts. The fact that the accompaniment was transcribed for the piano affected little the beauty of the work, which is a fortunate example of the composer's style, and was played expressively by Madame Neruda and Dr. Joachim. Both quintets were admirably played, Miss Agnes Zimmerman's share in the second, as also her accompaniment to the Spohr concerto, being perfectly performed. Miss Fanny Davies and Signor Piatti gave a delightful reading of Rubinstein's Sonata in D for pianoforte and 'cello, and the vocalist, Miss Liza Lehmann, sang with her accustomed charm of style two anonymous French songs.

The programme of the concert given in Princes' Hall on Saturday evening by the Musical Artists' Society contained, as is usual on these occasions, many new compositions by members of varying interest. It opened with a quartet in G for strings by Mr. J. Jacques Haakman, who had given to each movement an explanatory title setting forth the pastoral scene represented by each. The piece is clever and well constructed, the first movement especially being tuneful, but the work would obviously have been more satisfactory as originally written, i.e. for pianoforte and violin. It was played by the composer, together with Messrs. Harry Lee, W. Laubach, and B. Reynolds. Mr. Erskine Allon appeared as the composer of a sonata in G for violin and piano, which he played excellently with M. Buzian. The work abounds in clever phrases cleverly combined and written, and contains much that is beautiful, although the accompaniment is somewhat too heavy and full. A sonata in D for pianoforte and 'cello, by Mr. E. H. Thorne, was marked by much powerful writing and clearness and vigour of theme. It was interpreted by Messrs. Henry Smith and Mr. B. Albert with admirable effect. Messrs. Albert Fox and Gerald Walenn were associated in the presentation of a sonata in D for pianoforte and violin by Mr. Walter Macfarren, a scholarly and pleasing work, bright and definite in its themes, but of somewhat familiarly Mendelssohnian character. Miss Dora Bright contributed, and with Miss Ethel Boyce, played a set of variations for two pianofortes on a theme by G. Macfarren. These showed with admirable clearness the technical knowledge and taste of the young lady, and lost nothing in their interpretation. The vocal compositions included three charming duets by F. H. Cowen, very tastefully sung by Mrs. Campbell Perugini and Miss Mary Hutton; "The Lark and the Nightingale," a refined setting by Mr. H. C. Banister of Hartley Coleridge's pretty words; and a highly dramatic song by Miss Oliveria Prescott, "Ask me no more," in which the composer has well realised the significance of the Laureate's beautiful poem.

An extremely creditable performance of Sterndale Bennett's "Woman of Samaria" was given, under the direction of Mr. J. L. Phillips, on Thursday evening, March 27th, at Regent's Park Chapel, by the Regent's Park Sacred Harmonic Society. Both band and chorus were satisfactory, the former being noticeable for precision, and the latter, though sometimes unduly loud, singing well in tune. The solos were in the safe hands of Mrs. Mary Davies, Miss Eleanor Rees, Mr. T. W. Turner, and Mr. Frank Rose. The first part of the concert comprised Spohr's cantata "God, Thou art Great," Handel's "Occasional" and Mendelssohn's "Athalia" overtures, and Gounod's song "There is a Green Hill"—the latter item being admirably sung by Miss Eleanor Rees. Mr. J. L. Phillips is to be congratulated warmly on the efficiency attained by his band and chorus; nor should a word of praise be withheld from Mr. H. R. Starr, the leader, and Mr. Ernest Z. Biles, the organist.

The Wimbledon Hill Choral Society, conducted by Mr. Wallace Wells gave a concert at the Lecture Hall, Wimbledon, on the 27th ult., when admirable performances were given of "The Walpurgis Night;" Gounod's Motett for soprano solo and chorus, "Gallia;" and "The Sun Worshipers," by Goring Thomas. The solos in these works were sung by members of the society, of whom mention may be made of Miss Whitfield, who artistically displayed a sympathetic and well-trained voice in Gounod's Motett; Mrs. Dean, a rich-toned contralto; Mr. David Wilson, a rising young vocalist, evidently much enamoured of his profession, and therefore on the surest road to success; and Mr. Grundtvig, and Mr. Percy Ball, both possessing capital bass voices. The chorus singing

was extremely good, the effect being much enhanced by the admirable manner in which the instrumental accompaniments were played by the pianist, Miss Grundtvig, assisted by a small band of strings. Mr. Wallace Wells may be congratulated on having the direction of such an intelligent body of vocalists, and the society on possessing so skilful a conductor.

That the recent appointment of Mr. Frederick Corder to the post of orchestral director at Trinity College—Mr. Mount having resigned—was a wise step, was plainly shown on Monday evening at the Orchestral Concert given by the students at Princes' Hall. All the orchestral items of the programme were played with a precision and spirit hitherto uncommon, the interpretation of J. F. Barnett's Pastoral Suite affording an excellent instance of the marked improvement noticeable. A refined reading of Schumann's Concertstück was given by Miss Ellena M. Shuttleworth, and praise almost identical may be awarded to Miss Edith Idle for her rendering of Bennett's Concerto in C minor. Note should be made also of a MS. Overture by Mr. A. Carnall, which, though lacking in unity, contains many fine passages. Mr. W. Evans played the Andante and Allegro vivace from Mendelssohn's violin concerto, and songs were contributed by Miss Leipziger, who sang expressively Mr. Corder's graceful song, "O sun that wakenest all;" by Mr. J. B. Guy, Mr. Frank Swinford, and Miss M. Pinney.

On the afternoon of Friday of last week Miss Hope Temple's third annual concert took place in the Steinway Hall, when the crowded and enthusiastic audience testified plainly to the undiminished popularity enjoyed by this clever lady. It was natural that her own compositions should occupy a prominent place in the programme; natural, too, that their many virtues of grace, of thought, and beauty of expression should win for them a ready acceptance. Most of Miss Temple's songs then heard were old favourites, but a new one, "Mary Grey," as sung effectively by Mr. Lawrence Kellie, proved a worthy addition, for it is a song full of picturesque charm. Detailed criticism of the lengthy programme will scarcely be expected; it is sufficient to say that Miss Geraldine Ulmar sang with accustomed success "An Old Garden;" that Miss Grace Damian's beautiful voice was uplifted; that Mr. Oswald gave, in his most dramatic style, "Twas Surely Fate;" that Mr. Hayden Coffin and Mr. Courtice Pounds warbled as sweetly as usual; and that M. Johannes Wolff played pieces by Vieuxtemps and Massenet with the utmost brilliance. When it is added that Mr. Herbert Standing, who is a fellow of infinite humour, recited Calverley's "Gemini and Virgo" with great spirit, and gave some admirably funny and faithful imitations of popular actors to the huge delight of his audience, it will be seen that those who came to the concert were not sent empty away.

The Euterpe Quartet gave their second annual smoking concert at the Lyric Club on Friday of last week. The quartet has undergone a slight change in its composition, consisting now of Messrs. William Nicholl, Oswald, Frederic King, and B. H. Grove, and is an accurate model of all that a male quartet should be. The voices blend admirably, the balance of tone is perfect, and the ensemble is artistic to the highest degree, the performances being marked by a singular unanimity of intention. These qualities were especially noticeable in Chwatal's "Lovely Night," a clever transcription by Mr. Arthur E. Godfrey of Lacome's popular "Estudiantina," and a delightfully humorous setting, by Dr. F. E. Gladstone, of Calverley's quaint poem "Shelter." Each of the four also contributed solos, Mr. Nicholl winning especial approval for two Italian songs, which he sang with his familiar refinement and purity of style, while Mr. Oswald presented with not less effect a new song by Mr. Godfrey, "The Merry Monks," which by virtue of its clever humour and spirit should prove a favourite with baritones. In addition to these, Mr. J. T. Carrodus and Mr. William Coenen played, each in his best manner, solos on the violin and pianoforte respectively; Mr. Fred Upton, Mr. E. J. Odell, and Mr. John Proctor gave very funny recitations; and Mr. Dawson and Mr. Arthur Thompson also sang. Mr. Arthur Godfrey was an excellent accompanist.

The second of Miss Bessie Cox's series of three concerts was given at Steinway Hall on Thursday, March 27th. The vocal share of the programme was contributed entirely by Miss Cox's pupils, whilst the instrumental portion was in the hands of Messrs. A. M. Norton (flute), Felix Berber (violin), and Van der Straeten ('cello), who gave several solos and obligati in the course of the concert. Space will not allow of detailed notice of the many items of the programme, which were on the whole of a



pecidedly satisfactory nature, and reflected much credit upon Miss Cox's method of tuition. Amongst the instrumentalists the success of the evening was undoubtedly made by Mr. Berber, whose admirable playing both as soloist and accompanist was a real musical treat.

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The Popular Musical Union gave a performance of the "Elijah" at the People's Palace on Saturday evening, which was listened to attentively by an audience of over three thousand dwellers in the East End. When it is said that the chorus and orchestra were wholly composed of amateurs it will be understood that ordinary criticism would be out of place, but the executants one and all may be credited with the best intentions, carried out in many cases with conspicuous success. Mrs. Helen Trust sang the important part of the Widow with considerable dramatic power and truthful expression, Mrs. Hancock made the customary effect in "O Rest in the Lord," and Messrs. Page and Kempton were entrusted with the parts of Obadiah and the Prophet. Mr. W. Henry Thomas conducted.

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The *employés* of Messrs. Chappell and Co.'s firm had their second annual dinner at the Holborn Restaurant on Saturday last, when the chair was taken by Mr. E. Chappell. After a bountiful meal an interesting programme of music was performed, Messrs. Neilson, Casper, A. Robinson, T. P. Rich, and many others contributing notably to the amusement of the numerous company.

### PROVINCIAL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

LEEDS, MARCH 31.—It has for some years been customary at the Leeds parish church to mark the season of Lent by giving Bach's "St. Matthew" Passion at two special week-day services. This year, however, Bach has given place to Gounod, whose "Redemption" was performed on the 27th and 31st March in a manner which left very little to be desired excepting the presence of an orchestra, for though the accompaniments were very cleverly played (by the organist of St. Martin's, Mr. Alfred Benton), the organ proved, on the whole, as could only be expected, a sorry substitute for a band. This was especially noticeable in the instrumental introduction depicting the Creation, in which the very crude and uncomfortable discords were more painfully discordant than is the case when they are rendered by an orchestra. As a whole the oratorio, which has never before been given in Leeds, proved well suited for church purposes, though we felt more strongly than ever that it is a work which has suffered from over-praise, being full of writing which is frequently "cheap," and occasionally commonplace, — *e.g.*, The March to Calvary, which Mrs. Partington, we believe, alluded to, by a happy "derangement of epitaphs," as the "Cavalry March." However, now that it is rumoured that the publishers have "got their money back," "The Redemption" will probably be allowed to take its own proper level among oratorios of the present day. As we have intimated, the performance was a capital one; the chorus, consisting of the regular choir, augmented for the occasion by several ladies and gentlemen, doing its work well, and the soloists, especially the tenor, the bass, who sang Our Saviour's Words, and the contralto being equally satisfactory. Dr. Creser, the parish church organist, conducted.

MANCHESTER.—The Philharmonic Choral Society closed their tenth season on the 22nd ult., when a concert was given in the Free Trade Hall, with Miss Albu, Madame Hope Glenn, Mr. Henry Lloyd, and Mr. Charles Manners as soloists. Handel's "Ode on St. Cecilia's Day," with Miss Albu and Mr. H. Lloyd as principals, Stafford Smith's "Blest pair of syrens," E. Fanning's "Liberty," and Hamish MacCunn's chorus of spirits were the principal items. The beautiful airs in Handel's ode suffered considerably, as neither of the soloists seemed at home with the work; the evident relish with which the choir fulfilled their part rendered the discrepancy still more noticeable. Mr. G. W. Lane's choir numbers considerably over two hundred members, and the precision, clear enunciation, and expression which marked their performances showed the great care with which they had been rehearsed, even to the smallest detail. Mr. Willy Hess (whom we always hear with pleasure) contributed violin solos by Wieniawski, Mackenzie, and Ries. Mr. Herbert Walker accompanied throughout in a most musicianly manner. Mr. Bauerkeller commenced his third series of "Quartet Evenings" on the 27th ult. The programme consisted of Rubinstein's Quartet in C minor, op. 17, Mozart's

Quartet in C, and Dvůrák's Quintet in G, op. 77. The introduction of a Quintet rendered the title of these "Evenings" rather a misnomer; but it was one which the audience would readily forgive, as Dvůrák's composition proved a welcome addition to the scheme. The work is thoroughly characteristic of the composer, and the individuality of style so pronounced that we are never in doubt as to the author. We cannot say the same of Rubinstein's Quartet, for some of the movements— notably the third, a beautiful four-part "song without words"—might have been written by Mendelssohn, so similar is the style and workmanship. Apart from this consideration, the quartet contains much effective writing, and we prefer it to many of Rubinstein's later and more ambitious works. The artists were Messrs. Bauerkeller, Harmer, Nicholls, Smith, and Brazillier. With the exception of an occasional undue prominence on the part of the second violinist, the performances were of the highest excellence.

BIRMINGHAM, MARCH 31.—The Birmingham Festival Choral Society have given their last concert of the season. It was of the right and legitimate kind, for ballad concerts of "miscellaneous character" are unworthy of their traditions. For once Mr. Stockley yielded his baton to another, and to a newcomer, Mr. Hamish McCunn, the gifted young Scotchman, who came down to conduct his own cantata, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." We have already men hailing from the far north who are making a great reputation in all parts of the globe, and to these must be added Hamish McCunn. To write a work like the cantata in question shows signs not only of talent but also of a certain amount of genius. We were struck by the originality and colouring of the orchestration, noticeably by the clever employment of brass and wood-wind instruments. We certainly missed true melodic and lyrical inspiration, although the air given to the contralto is exquisitely beautiful; on the other hand, his choruses—especially "Before their eyes the Wizard lay" and "O Caledonia! stern and wild"—are remarkably powerful. The Scotch character of the music is revealed in more than one instance. The chorus and orchestra did every

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justice to a first performance, and the composer met with an enthusiastic reception, and was loudly recalled to the platform at the conclusion. The second part of the concert was devoted to the "Creation," Parts I. and II., and it is safe to say that a finer performance of Haydn's charming music has never been given. Mr. Stockley conducted the oratorio in his usual efficient and musicianly manner. The organ accompaniments were rendered by Mr. Perkins. Of the principal artists, Madame Dotti, Miss Dews, Mr. Henry Piercy, and Mr. Andrew Black, we can only speak in the highest terms. Mr. Black was heard for the first time, and created a most favourable impression by his earnest and refined singing. He has a very sympathetic and cultured voice, and his phrasing showed him to be an artist of special gifts. We cannot say that the hall was full; on the other hand, we have to state that Sullivan's "Gondoliers" is filling the Prince of Wales Theatre nightly. It is the fashion to hear Sullivan's

comic operas, which are excellent in their way, but it is evidently out of fashion to listen to a chorus and orchestra of 450 performers employed in performing the highest examples of musical art.

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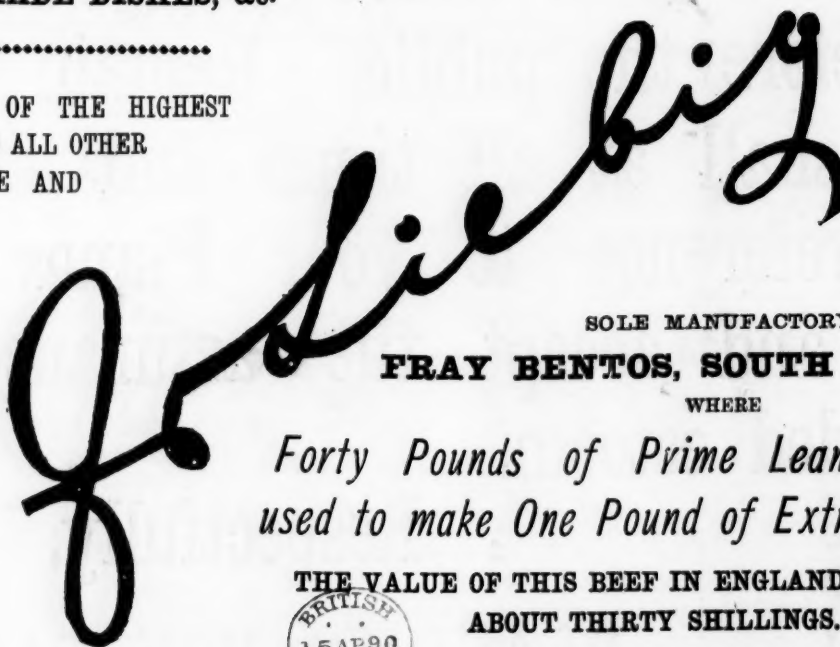
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